

CONAN THE  
BARBARIAN

MARVEL COMICS GROUP™

APPROVED BY  
THE COMICS CODE  
Ages 12+

20¢ 20 NOV  
02498



# CONAN

THE BARBARIAN



THE BLACK HOUND OF VENGEANCE!

# CONAN THE BARBARIAN

# The Black Shroud of VENGEANCE!

THE AFTERMATH  
OF BATTLE:

A TIME TO SCRAMBLE  
BACK ABOARD THE  
TURANIAN DRAGON-  
PROWS WHICH LURCH  
AND CHURN IN THE  
WATERS OFF BESIEGED  
MAKKALET.

A TIME FOR THE FIRST  
GASPED TELLINGS OF  
DEEDS WHICH SHALL  
GROW INTO LEGEND...  
FOR THE CLEANSING OF  
BLOOD-CAKED SWORDS...

STAN LEE  
PRESENTS:

ROY THOMAS & BARRY SMITH  
WRITER/EDITOR ARTIST

DAN ADKINS  
EMBELLISHER JOHN COSTANZA  
LETTERER

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURES OF  
THE HERO CREATED BY  
ROBERT E. HOWARD

...AND FOR THE  
LICKING OF THOSE  
WOUNDS WHICH  
ARE OF THE BODY...!

A TIME, TOO, FOR WONDERING ABSENTLY AT THE ERRANT FATE WHICH HAS LED A HOMELESS BARBARIAN INTO THE SERVICE OF A GREAT EASTERN EMPIRE...

AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE? TO RESTORE TO HIS RIGHTFUL TEMPLE IN TURAN A KIDNAPED MAN-GOD...THE SO-CALLED TARIM INCARNATE...



...AND TO RAZE TO THE GROUND THE PROUD CITY WHICH HAS DARED CLAIM THAT GOOLING FOR ITS OWN!

MY NAME IS ALAFAHAL... AND I WISHED TO THANK YOU, CUMMERIAN, FOR SLAYING THE MIRROR-DEMON THAT THINNED OUR RANKS,

AND I DO WHAT I WAS PAID TO DO.

NO MORE.



THE WOUNDED ARE FILED IN HEAPS UPON THE DARK-STAINED BOARDS, LIKE SCARCELY-LIVING SACRIFICES BEFORE THE WOODEN, ONE-ARMED IMAGE OF THE CAPTIVE TARIM...



AN EDUCATED MAN, EVEN IN THIS WARLIKE HYBORIAN AGE, MIGHT FIND WORLDS OF MEANING IN THE SCENE.



...SEEKS... AND FINDS.

FAFNIR!

HELLO...  
LITTLE  
MAN...

HOW GOES IT,  
VANIRMAN? THAT  
FLAMING ARROW  
WHICH FELLED YOU?

--DIDN'T QUITE  
HAVE MY NAME  
SCRAWLED ON IT,  
IT SEEMS.

THOUGH  
IT MIGHT AS  
WELL  
HAVE.

AH, CONAN,  
CONAN... IT'S  
A FOOL  
THING I'VE  
DONE...

TRAVELING HALF-  
WAY 'CROSS THE  
WORLD... TO DIE  
AT THE HAND OF  
A MAN I'LL NEVER  
SEE...



ENOUGH  
TALK OF  
DYING. YOU  
SEEM WELL  
ENOUGH  
TO ME.

I'LL CART  
YOU TO WHERE  
YOU'LL BE  
AMONG THE  
LIVING, MAN...

...IT MIXED WITH THE  
BURN IN MY LEFT  
ARM...

LIVING,  
PERHAPS...  
BUT NO  
LONGER  
QUITE A  
MAN.

I FELL...  
CONAN... MUCH  
FOUL WATER  
GOT INTO MY  
WOUND...

...AND THEY  
HAD TO CUT  
IT OFF.

NOW, GO AWAY...  
AND PLAY WITH  
YOUR BATTLE  
TOYS, LITTLE  
MAN.

OLD  
FAFNIR...  
NEEDS  
HIS...  
REST...



EVENING COMES, WITHOUT  
A RENEWAL OF THE CONFLICT  
'TWIXT SHIPS AND SHORE...

AND  
A GRIM  
CONAN  
KEEPS  
SOMEONE  
WATCH  
OVER A  
SLEEPING  
FRIEND.

NO, BARBARIAN! PRINCE  
YEZDIGERD WANTS TO  
SEE YOU... NOW...

AND IF I DON'T  
WANT TO SEE  
HIM, BALTHAZ?

YOU WILL--IF  
YOU WANT REVENGE  
FOR THIS DAY'S  
SLAUGHTER.

I THOUGHT THAT  
WOULD STIR YOU.

BALTHAZ...  
I'D NOT  
WANT YOUR  
BLADE THAT  
NEAR MY  
THROAT.

WARM, EH?  
IT'S YOUR  
HAIR--TOO  
LONG FOR  
THIS ACCURSED  
CLIMATE.

SAY THE  
WORD, AND  
I'LL TRIM  
IT FOR  
YOU.



I'LL JUST TIE IT  
BACK, TILL I FIND  
SOMEONE I TRUST  
TO CUT IT...

...WHICH MAY WELL  
BE, TILL I GET  
BACK HOME TO  
CIMMERIA.

WE ARE HERE,  
O PRINCE... AND  
STAND READY FOR  
THE MISSION  
OF WHICH YOU  
HAVE SPOKEN.

EXCELLENT. OUR  
CONTACT IN  
THE CITY HAS  
SENT WORD OF  
A WHARF THAT  
WILL BE UN-  
GUARDED.

IT IS CUSTOMARY, MY  
PRINCE, FOR A COMMANDER  
TO SPEAK THE BLESSING  
OF TARIM BEFORE...

OH YES... I  
FORGOT.

"MAY  
GREAT  
TARIM  
WATCH  
OVER  
YOU."

NOW  
GO!

NOT SO FAST,  
TURANIAN. NO ONE  
HAS TOLD ME  
OF ANY MISSION...

WHY, IT'S TO STEAL  
INTO MAKKALET,  
OF COURSE--INTO  
ITS HOLY OF  
HOLIES...

I CARE LITTLE  
FOR GODS SO  
WEAK THEY CAN  
BE CAPTURED.

BUT I HAVE SEEN WHAT  
HYRKANIAN ARROWS  
DID TO FAFNIR...

SUIT YOURSELF.  
BUT DON'T BE SO  
NOISY ABOUT IT...



EVEN THE DULLARDS  
OF MAKKALET  
COULDN'T SLEEP  
THRU THAT HARSH,  
UNTUTORED VOICE  
OF YOURS....









WHILE, ON THE COBBED STREETS WITHOUT...

"NO! WHAT HAS HAPPENED, BROTHER?"

"WE KILLED OUR TURANIANS, DOWN BY THE QUAY... BUT WHAT...? OTHERS MADE ME POINT THEM TO THE TEMPLE."

"THRU GLAZED EYES, I... SAW THEM ENTER IT..."

"THEY WENT INSIDE THE TEMPLE OF KHARAM-AKKAD!"

"THEN, WE'VE NO FURTHER FEAR OF THEM..."

"...UNLESS YOU'RE ONE WHO FEARS DEAD MEN!"

WITHIN, BLACK SEEMS TO FOLD IN UPON BLACK.

FOUR MEN FAN OUT IN FOUR DIRECTIONS...

ONE DRIVEN BY THE WELLING DESIRE FOR REVENGE...

...OTHERS BY QUITE DIFFERENT DEMONS...

"A TURANIAN --COME TO STEAL BACK THE TARIM!"

STEAL, YOU SHINE?"

DID YOU SAY STEAL?

THE LIVING TARIM BELONGS TO AGHRAPIUR-- NOW AND FOREVER!

HE'LL TELL YOU THE SAME-- WHEN YOU GREET HIM IN HIS GREAT HOUSE OF BADES!

WHILE, UPSTAIRS, BEYOND THE SOUND OF SLAUGHTER...

"HALT!"

WHO ARE YOU? NONE OF OUR GUARDSMEN, I'D RECKON!

SPEAK UP, CUR! I ASKED YOU A--

...QUESTIONNAIREE!

VENGEANCE IS THE LIFE-SONS OF THE BLEAK NORTH. STILL, CONAH'S SLAYINGS ARE LIKE DRI-DUST IN HIS MOUTH...

FOR, IT IS NOT A STARTLED MATCHMADE HE LONGS TO CARVE WITH HYRKANIAN STEEL...

...BUT THE PHANTOM ARCHERS OF MAKRALE...



...OR PERHAPS KHARAM-AKKAD HIMSELF...

AS FOR THE ARCHERS:  
THEY'VE BEEN TAKEN  
CARE OF, BETTER  
THAN CONAN YET  
SUSPECTS...!

EVEN NOW, A HASTY TORCH IS  
BEING SET TO THE ROOF AND ITS  
GRISLY CONTENTS...

FROM HIS  
FLAGSHIP,  
YEZDIGERD  
SEES THE GROM  
FUNERAL PYRE...

MAH: MOCK  
BOTH BALTHAZ  
AND THE TAIM  
INCARNATE,  
WOULD THEY?

NOW, I'LL REJOIN  
THAT BARBARIAN  
LOUT AND MY  
TWO UNDERLINGS, SO THAT—

THE SUDDEN SCREAM FROM 'BALTHAZ' LEFT  
IS LIKE NOTHING HUMAN...

WELL, NEITHER  
OF THEM WILL  
EVER MOCK  
ANYTHING  
AGAIN.

NOR IS THAT  
WHICH SHATTERS  
THE BLACK  
SILENCE OFF  
TO HIS RIGHT.



AAOOH!

...ALONE,  
BUT FOR  
THE HATED  
CIMMERIAN...



CONAN, TOO,  
HAS HEARD  
THESE  
GURGLING  
DEATH-  
RATTLES...

...AND STANDS AS IF  
READY TO FLEE THE  
CHAMBER BEFORE HIM,  
AS IF TO ENTER IT.

AT LENGTH, HOWEVER,  
CURIOSITY WINS  
THE DAY...

CURIOSITY...  
THE HEAVY  
ODOR OF BURNING  
INCENSE...

...AND THE SIGHT OF  
A GLEAMING SWORD,  
IN RUBY-ENCRUSTED  
SCABBARD, SLUNG  
OVER A GREAT, UN-  
GUARDED SHIELD.



...AS INDEED HE LIVES TO COLLECT IT!

DO THEY LET THIEVES,  
HOW, INTO THE HOUSE  
OF TARIM?



WHO ARE  
YOU, WOMAN?

TELL ME  
QUICKLY, NOW--  
AND NONE OF YOUR  
SCREAMING--

--OR ONE TURN OF  
MY WRIST WILL  
SNAP THAT PRETTY  
NECK!

CALMER NOW, EH?  
GOOD... FOR I'M NO  
THIEF!

HOW DARE YOU LAY HANDS  
ON ME, YOU-- YOU--



--UNLESS YOU'RE  
MORE THAN THAT--?

NO, NO MORE.  
JUST... A  
TEMPLE  
WENCH.

BUT AS FOR YOUR NOT BEING A  
THIEF...  
IS KHARAM-AKKAD  
IN THE HABIT OF  
GIVING AWAY  
SWORDS OF  
STATE TO MEN  
WHO SPEAK OUR  
TONGUE WITH  
NORTHERN  
ACCENTS?

BUT I'M A  
SOLDIER,  
NOT A  
THIEF.

AND I DON'T  
HAVE TO  
ANSWER FOR  
MY ACTIONS  
TO A TEMPLE  
WENCH!

AS ELSEWHERE  
BENEATH THE  
HYRKANIAN  
MOON...

AND, IF NOT  
FOR THE  
GOLDEN  
WREATH  
AROUND HIS  
WRINKLED  
BROW



HO, LYKAS.. BACK FROM THE CAMP  
OF MY COMMANDERS, I SEE!

HOW GOES  
IT ON THE  
DEPARTURE?

NOT WELL!  
MY LORD.

SWIFT-LEGGED  
RUMOR SAYS THAT  
TURANIANS HAVE  
INFILTRATED THE  
CITY.

...AND THAT...

ARE YOU  
LISTENING,  
S'RE?

EH? OH YES,  
YES... I WAS  
MERELY  
WONDERING...

WHY MY  
QUEEN  
STROLLS SO  
LONG IN THE  
GARDEN...



RUN, WARRIOR! FLEE--ERE  
THE PRIEST CAN WORK HIS  
MAGICKS ON YOU!

SO, MAJESTY,  
YOUR HUSBAND  
THE KING  
WOULD BE  
INTRISUED,  
I'M SURE...

...TO LEARN  
THAT, OVER YOUR  
OWN FAITHFUL  
PRIEST...

...YOU FAVOR A BLACK-  
MANED YOUNG BAR-  
BARIAN, A TURANIAN  
LACKEY WHO WOULD  
DOUBTLESS HAVE  
SLAIN YOU...

ONE LONE MAN CAN  
SCARCELY HARM OUR  
CITY, KHARAM. I AM  
GLAD HE HAS  
ESCAPED YOUR  
CLUTCHES!

"I DESIRED  
THAT HE FLEE  
INTO MY SECRET  
PASSAGE..."

HAD HE BUT  
SUSPECTED YOUR  
TRUE IDENTITY!"

ESCAPED,  
MAJESTY? NAY...

"WHICH LEADS  
BUT TO THE  
INNERMOST  
RECESSSES  
THE TEMPLE."

"WE WILL BE  
HALTING  
NOW...  
FEARFUL,  
UNCERTAIN

"WE WILL TURN;  
EVER SO SLOWLY..."

"...TO FIND THAT HE STARES  
INTO THE LOATHSOME FACE  
OF DEATH ITSELF..."

"HIS OWN DEATH."

"...WHICH  
NEITHER  
HAMMERING  
FIST NOR  
FLASHING  
SWORD  
CAN LONG  
ALLAY!"

"FOR A MIRROR  
IS TRUTH--  
AND TRUTH IS  
A THING NOT OF  
THE EYE ALONE  
--BUT OF THE  
NIGHT-DARK  
SOUL!"



...IN  
MY  
NAUGHT  
SAVED  
A  
DIMLY  
PER-  
CEIVED  
LIGHT.



CONAN'S OWN MUSHED BREATHING IS THE LOUDEST SOUND IN THE CHAMBER, AS HE STRIDES FORWARD... SLOWLY, UNSURELY, YET FOR ALL THAT LIKE SOME SLEEK NORTHERN PANTHER.



SOMEHOW... HE CANNOT KNOW HOW... HE IS CERTAIN IT IS THE TAOOM INCARNATE... THE CAPTIVE MAN-GOD FOR WHOM A WAR RAGES... WHO SITS THAT MARBLE DAIS.



BUT WHETHER A MAN MAY DARE FOR DARING TO LOOK UPON A GOD THAT CONAN CANNOT SAY.

AND SO,  
SWORD  
RAISED...

...HE STEPS CLOSER...



CLOSER...



HE PARTS  
HIS LIPS TO  
SPEAK...!



AT THE FIRST  
WHISPERED  
SYLLABLE...

...THE MIRRORED  
FLOOR BECOMES  
A GREAT AND  
BESTIAL MAW...

...AND THERE IS  
SILENCE ONCE  
MORE IN THE  
TEMPLE OF MARQUEL.

SILENCE,  
FOOLISH  
STUPID  
DARKESS  
DEATH...



HE STANDS...  
STOLEN BLADE  
ONCE MORE  
AT THE  
READY.

THEN: AN  
OMINOUS  
SNARL...

AND CONAN  
REMEMBERS...

SO, BARBARIAN  
--YOU HAVE  
GONE THE WAY  
OF YOUR TWO  
TURANIAN  
COMRADES--

...REMEMBERS THE  
WORDS OF THE  
GAUNTLET  
MASTER...

--THE  
WAY  
OF--



THEN, EVEN AS BEAR-TRAP JAWS  
FASTEN THEMSELVES GREEDILY  
UPON HIS UPPER ARM...



...THE CIMMERIAN,  
BY SHEER STRENGTH  
OF SINEW AND OF  
WILL, PULLS HIMSELF  
AROUND.



TILL HE IS  
ATOP THE  
FROTHING,  
WRITHING  
DEVIL-HOUND.



THEN, WITH A  
MIGHTY JERK  
WHICH RENDS  
FLESH AND  
FANG ALIKE,



...TO IMPALE ITSELF HUNGRILY UPON A  
MAN-MADE TALON!



...AND TURNING--LEAPS!

BUT, SWIFT THOUGH THE PAIN-MADDENED BEAST MAY BE--THIS TIME, THE MAN IS SWIFTER YET!



STRIVING TO IGNORE THE AGONY DEALT BY RAKING CLAWS, CONAN GRAPS ONE END OF THE CHAIN IN EITHER HAND...



PULLING IT--YE SOME GREAT METAL MOOSE, TIGHTER, TIGHTER....



THE DEVIL-BRUTE'S BREATHING IS LABORED NOW--ITS SAVAGE SNARLS HAVE CEASED--IT KNOWS THAT IT IS NEAR TO DEATH--

BUT STILL, THOSE SLAVERING JAWS DRAW NEARER, EVER NEARER THE MAN'S THROAT....

ALL CONAN CAN SEE IS THE BLACK OF THE HOUND--



ONE FINAL TUSK-- THEN SUDDEDY HE DROPS ONE END OF THE CHAIN.

A MIGHTY HAND SEEKS OUT THE DEEP-IMBEDDED BLADE...



-- AND THE HILT OF HIS SWORD!

...AND IMBEDS IT...

MORE DEEPLY STILL!



FOR ONE ETERNAL INSTANT, THE MONSTER  
STILL LOOMS ABOVE THE FALTERING  
YOUTH... AS IF IMPERVIOUS TO ARM

THEN, DARK-  
FINGERED  
DEATH  
CLAIMS  
HIS  
OWN...

AND, WITH A  
THRCATY  
GRUNT, CONAN  
HURLS THE  
LIMP CARCASS  
FROM HIM.

FOR LONG MINUTES,  
NOTHING MOVES  
WITHIN THE NIGHTED  
CHAMBER. THEN...

SO... YOU WERE  
A TRUE BEAST.  
AFTER ALL.

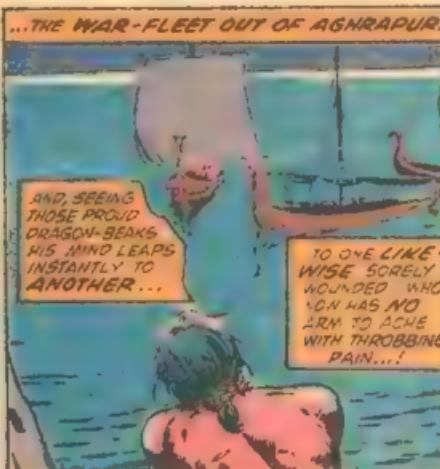
I BEGAN...  
TO WONDER...

...TO FIND HIMSELF  
RESTING ON ROCKY  
BLUFFS WHICH GIRD  
ONE END OF  
MAKKALET...

AND NOW, WITH AN EFFORT WHICH RACKS EACH MOVEMENT WITH SOUL-FELT  
PAIN, CONAN BEGINS TO CRAWL... TO PULL... TO INCH HIS TORTURED  
BODY AWAY FROM THE FALLEN HOUND, TOWARD SOME DISTANT SOUND,  
WHICH THROBS FIRST SOFTLY, NOW MORE LOUDLY IN HIS FEVERED BRAIN...



...UNTIL, AT LAST, HE  
STAGGERS UPWARD  
THRU AN EGRESS  
WHICH GAPES  
BEFORE HIM...



# •EPJLOGUE•

**T**he waning moon shimmered above the lepid waters like a madman's lantern.

Slowly, with great laborious strokes, the barbarian swam toward the proud flagship of Yerdigerd, "prince of all Turan."



**F**ingers trembling from more than chill night air, deck hands hauled him aboard.

**T**he bone-weary Cimmerian was still shaking himself, like a dog fresh from its bath, when a furtive whisper assailed his ears: "Your red-bearded friend is dead." Conan took two breaths. Then: "How?" His eyes said much more.



**I**t was Balthaz' doing. He came back not an hour ago, and angrily commanded that the dead be thrown overboard. The Vanirman, as well."

"But Fafnir was not dead?"

"Not then. Not yet. But he surely is by now."

**W**ithout a word, the grim black-haired youth turned and strode barefoot across the blood-stained decks. He seemed scarcely to notice the dead and dying in his path, yet stepped lightly over them.



**F**rom the prow of the ship, where he was supervising the last dispositions, Balthaz saw him coming. Only the raising of an eyelid betrayed his surprise.

**I**t was Conan who spoke first. "Why?" That was all he said. Those standing but a few feet away could barely hear the soft thunder of the word.

"He was dying anyway." The reply fairly reeked with ill-disguised contempt. "What use to feed and coddle a one-armed old fool?"

A thin, tight smile played for a moment on Balthaz' lips. Lightly, he fingered the ornate dirk at his belt.

"Now go," he leered. "Or else I'll teach you what it means to challenge the orders of one who stands high in the favor of Yerdigerd himself--you, who fled Makkaret without so much as a sword to call your own!"

For an instant, silence hung heavy in the air.



**T**hen—  
**AAHGGG!**

**M**ore swiftly than eye could follow or hand could prevent, the Turanian's silver dirk left its gaudy scabbard... And plunged into its owner's heart!



**B**althaz was still slumping lifeless toward the deck as Conan pulled his scimitar likewise from its sheath. Soldiers ringed him about, yet stood frozen, until...

**S**lay him! It was Yerdiqerd himself who spoke.

**S**tung into obedience by their prince's crisp command, the soldiers moved haltingly forward. But they were slow, uncertain.

And Conan was like a lion among sheep.



**T**hen, only one bright-clad figure stood between the barbarian and the waves which lapped steadily below.  
"Half-savage!"  
I, Yerdiqerd, command it!"

**T**he answer rumbled across the deck, like distant thunder. But this time, all still left alive could hear it.

"Get out of my way!"



**T**erdiqerd was slow to move, until a scimitar's slash across his cheek sent him reeling backward.



**A**nd, amid a mighty hail of spears and death-tipped arrows, he leaped headlong into the open arms of the waiting, dark-eyed sea!

Fin.

# THE HYBORIAN PAGE

% MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

**SPECIAL BARBARIAN BULLETIN:** Due to the number of brand-new titles and features we've been tossing at you of late, we've had no room on our regular Bulpen Page to print the results of the 1971 Shazam awards — those coveted lightning-shaped statuettes given out by the comix industry itself to those among it who it feels have contributed creatively to the graphic-story form during the previous year.

Thus, instead of the expected comments on the "Frost Giant's Daughter" reprint in CONAN #16, we'll delay those (plus comments on Gil Kane's phantasmagorical fill-in issues) till next time and fill you in on the winners here and now, before it's time for the '72 ceremony! Here goes....

**ITEM!** We said we'd give it to you straight — and here it is! On May 30 just past, the famous Academy of Comic Book Arts held its second annual 1971 Awards Dinner, at which were presented its shiny and prestigious Shazam awards. We don't know about our Distinguished Competitors, but we've sworn to print a full list of the winners each and every year, so here goes — with a bit of appropriate commentary here and there:

First off, the Best Continuing Feature award went to Marvel's own CONAN THE BARBARIAN — a fitting tribute to the hard work which goes into each and every issue of that most unique magazine. Best Individual Story award went to "Snowbirds Don't Fly" in GREEN LANTERN #85.

In the Dramatic division, NEAL ADAMS was named best penciler (which makes us all the more eager to see the artwork on that new series he's working on for Marvel), DICK GIORDANO best inker — both repeats. While Marvel's own ROY THOMAS was tapped for best writer, largely on the basis of his work

on CONAN and THE AVENGERS. (Yep, there's a Humorous division, too — with JOHN ALBANO named best writer, Archie-illustrator DAN DECARLO best penciler, and HENRY SCARPELLI best inker. And you can see handsome Hank's work on display in the latest issue of HARVEY, if you like.)

Best Letterer award went to GASPAR SALADINO — not a familiar name to most Marvel boosters, but still the guy who's designed most of our far-out new logos over the past year. And TATJANA WOOD was named Best Colorist.

There were a few other awards, too. WILL EISNER, creator of the Spirit, was elected as the 1971 entry to ACBA's Hall of Fame; JACK KIRBY won an award for Special Achievement by an Individual; Britisher FRANK BELLAMY (who draws the English version of "Star Trek" for a weekly magazine there) was named best Foreign Artist; while MIKE KALUTA and underground comic artist RICHARD CORBEN tied for the New Talent kudos.

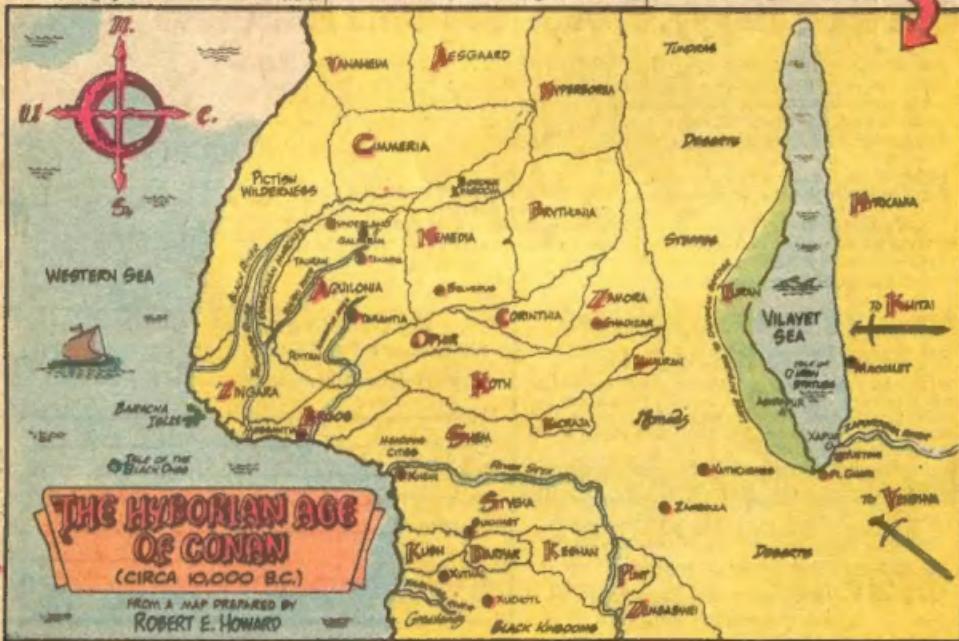
Oh yes — and Marvel madman GIL KANE won a Special Recognition award

for his paperback comix-novel *Blackmark!*

Well, that's it for this time around, people! See you next year for ACBA — see you next paragraph for Marvel! . . .



And, just because we feel we SHOULD every issue or so, here's Robert E. Howard's own MAP of the Hyborian world — with the besieged city of MAK-KALET discreetly added for your edification and enlightenment. Enjoy.



# GANGWAY, WORLD! MADCAP MARVEL MARCHES MERRILY ON!

## STAN LEE'S SOAPBOX

Know something? We Bullpenners are so excited about all the new mags we're creating for you that I don't know which to talk about first. So, instead of beating the drums for CLAWS OF THE CAT, JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY, JUNGLE ACTION, GUN-HAWKS, NIGHT NURSE, DOC SAVAGE, or SHANNA, THE SHE-DEVIL — I'm not even gonna mention 'em! I'll leave it to Rascally Roy to clue you in elsewhere on this page, now and in following issues. Instead, I'll just take another few secs to say "HI!" to all the great guys and gals I met during my most recent lecture tour at the Nassau Community College, the Universities of Winnipeg and Manitoba, Nashville Tennessee's Vanderbilt U., and good ol' Montana State. And, in case you think that the mighty Marvel craze is just a passing fad, you'd change your mind faster than Spidey can wiggle a web if you could have shared the wondrous welcomes at those hallowed halls of learning! (See? That'll prove I really can write a couple of sentences without plugging one of our titanic titles — titles such as WYATT EARP, GOTHIC THRILLERS, SPOOF — ew, forgive me, gang. This is a heckuva way for a Dr. of Comicology to behave!) **Excelsior!**

**ITEM!** Mind if we let you in on still another facet of just what goes on behind the scenes and in the minds of that amorphous entity we call the Mighty Marvel Bullpen? We didn't think so. Anyway, for years now, we've wanted to start a comic-mag which dealt exclusively with the derring-do of a gal superstar, instead of the usual hunk of masculine muscle. So, recently, Stan and Roy sat down to discuss what kind of book they should put out — and guess what! They came up with no less than three vastly different concepts, each of which they dug so much they ended up sticking all three on this summer's hectic schedule — two which debut this month, plus another that'll wing your way next time around!

First and foremost of these new spectaculairs just has to be the far-out-new feature we call: **THE CLAWS OF THE CAT!** And if the title doesn't tell you that it's destined to be one of the most action-packed, most talked-about new mags of this or any other year, we'll burn our vintage MMMS cards! What's more, **THE CAT** is drawn by none other than MARIE SEVERIN — and written by former Marvel staffer LINDA FITE, to boot! (At least this time, nobody's gonna be able to write in and say we've got artists and writers who don't understand the female of the species!) Also on sale right now is **LINDA CARTER, NIGHT NURSE**, drawn by longtime pro WINSLOW MORTIMER and scripted by Roy's

own lovely lady, JEANIE THOMAS. Yeah, we know — it sounds like just another romance mag, however well-written and drawn; but take it from us, friend — this one is realistic, exciting — and different! And next month sees the dramatic debut of **SHANNA, THE SHE-DEVIL** — starring perhaps the most beautiful and offbeat jungle heroine in the history of the graphic arts! GEORGE TUSKA is pencilin' that one, and it's being penned by longtime comix buff CAROL SEULING. That's right, effendi — three great new mags, all written by gals — yet aimed neither at gals nor at guys, but at true lovers of comix literature everywhere! Try 'em — you'll like 'em!

**ITEM!** If you've latched onto the brand new premiere issue of **CHAMBER OF CHILLS**, Marvel's newest and most nightmarish weird-type entry — if you dug last month's **JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY** #1 — then doubtless you've noticed that we've added something a wee bit new to this kind of anthology title! For the foreseeable future (and we've got a zingy new crystal ball!), virtually each and every issue of these two mags, plus the fast-upcoming **GOTHIC THRILLERS** already in the works, will headline an eerie adaptation of a masterpiece by a major fantasy author! **JOURNEY** #1 featured a tale by the late great ROBERT E. HOWARD, creator of Conan and Kull — and the first ish of **CHAMBER** features a story by world-famous author HARLAN ELLISON, whose recent *Again, Dangerous Visions* hardcover volume is already destined to become one of the great s-f works of the 70's! Also on hand in near-future issues of our terror-laden triumvirate will be the likes of THEODORE STURGEON, ROBERT BLOCH (author of Psycho), and a whole horde of the greatest names in imaginative fiction! They'll be backed up by plenty of original stories as well, written by some of the finest scripters in the history of comix — and together, they're gonna knock you right out of your haunted house!

**ITEM!** You'll see a few new names in our credit-captions this time around. We'll let you seek 'em out for yourself — but here's a bit of background: IRV WESLEY, a former Bullpen great in the fabulous 50's, has returned to the fold to help us out with the latest saga of one of our most unique heroes! Then there's a lad named CRAIG RUSSELL, who works with oldtimer DAN ATKINS out in the wilds of Ohio! Oh yes, and how could we forget JIM STARLIN, a talented newcomer who's also been assisting JOHN ROMITA on Spidey's recent capers? Jim, by the way, was brought to Marvel by another of its new lights, RICH BUCKLER! Face it, friends and neighbors — Stan was telling it like it is when he said that the whole Marvel gang was turned on by all the new mags and new projects we've got up our collective sleeve! In fact, the latest word around the Bullpen is that when you work for mighty Marvel, you're not just an artist — you're also a talent scout!

## MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST NOW ON SALE!

A Generous Grab-bag of Galvanizin' Goodies!

**SPIDER-MAN** #114: Spidey's got a spanking-new ulcer, right? And he's caught smack-dab in the middle of a gang war between Doc Ock and Hammerhead, right? So does that clue you in about which Marvel mag is definitely one of the wildest, woolliest chillers of the month? Right!!

**THOR** #205: The Thunder God vs. Mephisto — in the haunted halls of the Sub-World! And the demon's allies are none other than Thor's most trusted friends — including the lady Sif! Get it!

**CAPTAIN AMERICA & THE FALCON** #155: So you think you know all about the beginnings of our star-spangled stalwart? Well, wait'll you read — the Secret Origin of Captain America! A shocker!

**SPOOF** #2: Archie Bunker lives! Don't miss "Brawl in the Family!" Plus — "Tarzan the Apes," and some titillating "Tales from the Creep!"

**CHAMBER OF CHILLS** #1: Harlan Ellison's "Delusion for a Dragon-Slayer!" And two more of the most macabre masterworks of all! 'Nuff said?

**THE CLAWS OF THE CAT** #1: The dream of a dedicated genius — or the nightmare of a twisted madman? Which will win in the battle for the soul of the masked huntress we call — the Cat? With the most mind-staggering final page yet! Not to mention these *Bringers of Wonderment*:

**FANTASTIC FOUR** #128 (The battle to the finish with the Mole Man!) — **AVENGERS** #105 — **HULK** #157 (The Rhino returns!) — **DAREDEVIL** #93 — **SUB-MARINER** #55 — **IRON MAN** #52 — **CONAN THE BARBARIAN** #20 — **TOMB OF DRACULA** #5 (The Count takes a time-trip!) — **KULL THE CONQUEROR** #5 — **NIGHT NURSE** #1 — **WEREWOLF BY NIGHT** #2 — **CAPTAIN MARVEL** #23 — **MARVEL PREMIERE** #5 (Dr. Strange lives!) — **MARVEL TEAM-UP** #5 — **MARVEL FEATURE** #5 (Ant-Man and the Wasp — together again!) — **CREATURES ON THE LOOSE** #20 — **RED WOLF** #4 — **AMAZING ADV.** #15 — **SGT. FURY** #104 — and other winners too numerous (too humorous?) to mention! •••

